(b) To review the provisions of the University Grants Commission Act, 1956 and the All India Council for Technical Education Act 1987 and various suggestions for amendments to the said Acts by earlier Committees such as the Prof. Amreek Singh Committee.

(c) The role of the UGC in coordinating standards of higher education vis-a-vis the functional role of other statutory bodies such as AICTE, MCI, DCI NCI, NCTE, DEC, etc.

(d) An assessment of the requirements of autonomy of the UGC vis-a-vis the Central Government and that of the university system vis-a-vis the UGC.

(e) The role of the UGC/AICTE in determining and enforcing standards of higher education/technical education in State Universities and the possibility of introducing a system of incentives and disincentives so that national standards of higher education/technical education are not compromised or diluted.

International schools

216. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has turned its attention to another important emerging area — international schools and policies governing them;

(b) if so, whether the Ministry intends to give a framework of rules and regulations to the schools which are operating without any proper guidelines;

(c) whether he not only wants their approval to be routed through his Ministry, but is determined to limit the number of foreign teachers in such international schools to 20 per cent of the total strength; and

(d) whether any full/new norms have been prepared for the foreign schools and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHIR MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) to (d) A committee consisting of representatives of Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of External Affairs, Association of Indian Universities (AIU), Council of Board of School Education (COBSE), National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and eminent educationists, was constituted by the Ministry of Human Resource Development in February, 2006 to suggest a policy, inter-alia, regarding setting up of schools affiliated to foreign boards in India and appointment of foreign teachers in such schools. The recommendations of the Committee, inter-alia, relate to designation of a school as 'International' school, affiliation to foreign Boards, permissible limit for appointment of foreign teachers, etc. The recommendations are under consideration of the Government.

Setting up of family courts

217. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister has pointed out that many State Governments have failed to set up family courts, though it was their obligation to set up at least one family court in every district;

(b) if so, whether it was aimed at adoption of a conciliatory approach in such cases, giving preference to mutual settlement over adjudication by the court;

(c) if so, how many States have not set up these family courts so far;

(d) what are the main reasons;

(e) whether any directive has been issued by the Ministry to these States to set up family courts, to remove backlog in various courts; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) Yes, Sir. The Hon'ble Prime Minister, during his address at the Conference of Chief Ministers and Chief Justices of High Courts held on 19th April 2008, mentioned that the Family Court Act, 1984 mandates State Governments to establish Family Courts in urban areas with a population of over one million. Many State Governments have not discharged their legal obligation in this regard.

(b) The Family Courts Act was enacted in 1984 for settlement of family disputes in a congenial atmosphere. The Act makes it obligatory on the part of the Family Court to endeavour, in the first instance to effect a reconciliation or a settlement between the parties to a family dispute. During this stage, the proceedings will be informal and the rigid rules of procedure shall not apply.

(c) and (d) Twelve States/UTs have not set up any family court so far. The Government of Arunachal Pradesh has informed that the State does not have a single town or city whose population exceeds one million and also that all the family disputes are settled as per customary and personal law of the indigenous population of Arunachal Pradesh. Similarly the Government of Goa has informed that there appears to be no requirement for establishment of Family Court in the State. Also, the Government of J and K has informed that since the Family Court Act is not applicable to the State, no family court has been established in the State.

(e) and (f) Chief Ministers/ Administrators of all the State Governments/ Union Territories have been requested to establish Family Courts in all Districts of the country.

Amendment in Representation of People Act

†218. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to take any steps to keep hardcore criminals out of elections by amending the Representation of People Act, so that such criminals cannot become member of Parliament and State Legislatures;

---

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.